

Abraham Lincoln

A Character Study

To Mr. J. V. Oakleaf
with compliments of the author
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BY A. B. FUNK

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Greater recognition has been accorded Abraham Lincoln than any other man of all the ages. Of him more has been printed and spoken than of any other, with the possible exception of William Shakespeare. Lincoln volumes to a number well toward one hundred appear in our State Library, and still I fail sometimes to find Lincoln books that have been issued, while year by year the number grows. On those shelves I find forty Washington books, sixteen of Webster, and fifteen of Jefferson. More and more with the passing of the years does Lincoln become an outstanding figure among the greatest of mankind. More and more absorbing concern is manifest in the wealth of his achievement and the surpassing worth of his tender and charming personality. The recent excursion of twenty-five hundred children of southwest Iowa who went to Springfield to lay a wreath upon the tomb of Abraham Lincoln and to view objects of significance in the Lincoln home town is evidently the beginning of a great pilgrimage movement.

For the reason that it may be assumed you are all familiar with, at least, the leading events in this remarkable career, this paper will not be technically biographical nor chronologically historical. It is intended, rather, in the nature of inquiry affording basis for interpretation. The limitations of time will not permit verification as I proceed, but I submit no statement of fact I have not myself verified, in so far as practicable.

Genealogy does not account for this rare personality. The first American of this ancestry appeared in Connecticut about 1637. Downward this line proceeds through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Kentucky into the nineteenth century. Members of this family seemed usually to bear the stamp of mediocrity until the advent of the ignorant, shiftless Thomas Lincoln, from whose unpromising loins sprang the extraordinary Abraham. Lincoln seldom referred to his maternal ancestry. Perhaps the reason may be found in an exceptional conversation with Herndon in which he attributed such genius as he

possessed to the fact that his mother was the natural daughter of a Virginia planter. Her cousin, Dennis Hanks, in a clumsy endeavor to shield the honor of her mother, gives indubitable evidence that Nancy Hanks was born out of wedlock.

The poverty of the Lincolns in Kentucky and Indiana was not merely the ordinary experience of the frontier. Carl Schurz says: "We may search in vain among our celebrities for one whose origin and early life equaled that of Abraham Lincoln in wretchedness." Well might Lincoln say to one assigned to write his campaign biography that his early life could all be condensed into a single line from Gray's *Elegy*—"The short and simple annals of the poor." There was hardly anything in his early environment to inspire a desire for intelligence or to rise above the low level of ignorance and inferiority, which seemed to satisfy Thomas Lincoln and his stolid neighbors. Of the party which moved to Illinois in 1830, consisting of thirteen persons, Abraham and one other are said to have been the only ones who could read and write.

While there was no evidence of remarkable genius in the boy Lincoln, he did manifest intelligence, alertness and understanding to a degree perhaps unusual. Specimens of his writing, spelling and composition in early manhood are suggestive of real appreciation of form and pride in expression. Upon his knowledge of the rudiments acquired in less than a single year of schooling, in the early years at Salem he builded rapidly and substantially through self-development. With a little help from Mentor Graham he fairly devoured Lindley Murray, and when he wanted to take up surveying he speedily equipped himself in mathematics to do skilled work in a manner especially accurate and comprehensive.

Lincoln was more of a student than a reader. All through life his power of concentration was of immeasurable value. He could understand and interpret far beyond the ordinary when he applied himself to the study of fundamentals. Just to strengthen his equipment in penetration and in logic, he subdued six volumes of Euclid in his busy life as a lawyer after he retired from Congress in 1848. He seemed to relish intimacy

with problems and principles in which he might exercise his natural powers. Most men who move forward in intelligent pursuits without the aid of the schools build substantially on a more or less extensive knowledge of general literature. This was not Lincoln's way. His familiarity with the Bible is manifest all through his speeches and writings. Some plays of Shakespeare he read over and over again, while most of them he read not at all. He was fond of Burns. But he knew practically nothing of standard works of travel, of fiction, or of most of the best known poets. He was a great reader of newspapers, to which he subscribed in various sections of the country.

In his younger days Lincoln was fond of the company of women, but was not at his best in their presence. He was by no means a lady's man. He was not built on a popular society plan. His face challenged competition in homeliness, while his ungainly figure invited idle jest. A lady to whom he paid some apparently serious attention afterwards said: "He was deficient in those little links which make up the chain in a woman's happiness." And yet, the attentions of Lincoln were by no means unacceptable to the best young women of his acquaintance. With all his poverty of purse and background, and in spite of nature's neglect in his physical composition, he made good with the women with whom he associated, and he would seem to have sought the best in the community. Against forbidding circumstances, he won the heart of Ann Rutledge, the bright, particular star of Salem society. He seems to have schemed for the refusal he received at the hands of Mary Owen, a young woman of more than ordinary charms and character. Mary Todd, daughter of one of Kentucky's prominent families, comely, accomplished and popular in Springfield social circles, accepted his attentions and finally married him, after offense on his part fairly unpardonable.

In their determination to account for the Lincoln that ultimately challenged the respect and admiration of mankind, biographers have scrutinized and diagnosed every phase of his earlier years, and in this process his domestic relations have been given exhaustive consideration. Disclosures would seem to denote unhappiness, with little variation in the Lincoln home.

The mistress had a temper over which she had little control, which with slight provocation developed painful eruption. She was a good homekeeper, but seemed wholly wanting in domestic diplomacy, so necessary to congenial home atmosphere. Here, as elsewhere, the head of the home was difficult to understand. Affectionate and kindly, and never quarrelsome, he seems grievously to have lacked in understanding of the characteristics of feminine temperament, and was absolutely lost when it came to dealing with a wife like Mary Todd. His indifference to convention and his tendencies to ignore reasonable family regulation was a source of continual irritation. Weik says Mary Todd was the only person who recognized in her tall suitor a man of destiny.

Lincoln was, I think, the only president who held no church relationship. His religious views have received treatment at the hands of many writers. Men have seemed able to prove that he was definitely atheistic. Others have been more or less successful in identifying him as a life-long Christian. John Wesley Hill has written a very readable book entitled "Abraham Lincoln, Man of God," in which he assumes to show that from his youth up his subject made a record consistent with recognized Christian evidences. He fails to sustain the burden of proof, however. It might be said that Lincoln may be quoted in support of all the religious theories suggested by all his biographers. Not that he blew hot and cold on this or any other subject, but that he held different opinions at various stages of his life and development. His agnostic philosophy seemed to receive its first jolt in the death of a little son at Springfield. This bereavement sent him groping in the uncharted fields of faith where much of his confidence in infidelity was lost, though he failed to find anchorage in Christian hope and assurance. He was elected President. His burdens multiplied. The war was fairly appalling in its demands upon his equipment of body and mind and soul. He felt as never before the limitations of human resources. Men were dying on the battlefield and in camp and hospital. Death ruthlessly stalked among his dearest friends. Ellsworth and Lyon and Baker fell victim to remorseless war. The Lincoln temperament enter-

tained a keen sense of personal responsibility. More and more human wisdom and strength seemed grossly inadequate. More and more the great heart of the leader yearned for guidance man could not afford, and more and more he felt inclined to lean upon the divine arm. It was in these days, when every nerve was strained by the demands of inexorable public duty, that the awful mystery of death enveloped his own household and his amiable and captivating Willie, the idol of his soul, was no more, for God had taken him. In his anguish of spirit he more than ever sought refuge earth could not afford. Doubts were not all dispelled, but in his personal experiences, in his correspondence, public and private, and in his state papers was manifest a degree of faith and hope and trust exhibited by no president which preceded or followed him, nor perhaps by all of them combined. He saw "not through a glass darkly," but face to face, as it were, with the very infinite. His God was no impersonal, impalpable, impossible being, but a very present help in time of trouble. Warren G. Harding said in 1920: "In the darkest of his White House days when personal bereavement was added to national anxiety, he literally lived on his knees." In his expression of faith, Lincoln went farther than most members of orthodox churches today in acknowledgment of the literal truth of the Christian religion.

Few men in any generation have lead more exemplary lives. In the days when drinking was popular, he was a total abstainer and made no concealment of his temperance views. When the tobacco habit was so common that the non-user was a rare exception, he neither chewed nor smoked. When profanity was a common factor in conversation, he did not swear except when the demands of the situation made swearing a virtue. His relations with women were absolutely above reproach, according to the biographers who laid bare all the faults of his family and himself. A man of remarkable physical strength and without physical fear, he brooked personal insult rather than to fight. With all this irreproachable record, Lincoln never posed as virtuous in any particular. He was charitable to human faults and kindly to all forms of human weakness.

While Lincoln was fairly a model of morality among the aver-

age of mankind, and while strength of character was conspicuous in his moral equipment, he was yet a real human being in his lapses from the usual in personal conduct. His temperament exemplified a strange blend of exuberance and melancholy which perplexed his contemporaries and continue to puzzle those who come after them. His fund of anecdotes added to his popularity and to his success at the bar and in his earlier speaking. Some of these stories were not of the parlor variety, inviting much criticism. There would seem to be real basis, however, for the contention that he used these risque stories, not because but in spite of their odor, for the point they carried. Even in middle life Lincoln was given to ridiculous pranks. On the day in 1856 when he received a substantial vote for vice president in the first national republican convention, he indulged in horseplay so outlandish as to lead Judge Davis to comment upon this strange conduct on the part of a man being voted for as candidate for the second place in the nation. He had no taste nor talent for music, but about that time he went along the street in an omnibus making such noise as his wind could produce on a wheezy old harmonica. On several occasions he concentrated his mind and pinned his faith to invention so ridiculous as to be the subject of ribaldry. One such invention may now be seen in the Government Patent Office. He spent many hours on the imposisble problem of squaring the circle.

From his fun-making with the lapse of minutes he might give evidence of existence in the depths of despair. In such a mood he once wrote: "If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on the earth." These fits of melancholia have been held due to various causes—to liver trouble, to bad digestion, or to some gnawing secret, perhaps the deformity in his family tree. The congenital theory, however, would seem most plausible.

With all his apparent susceptibility Abraham Lincoln was a man of much native dignity. He never wore his heart upon his sleeve. The deeps of his great soul were never sounded by idle curiosity nor even by personal intimacy. He did not indulge in, nor permit the familiarity which breeds contempt. The

recipient of every one's confidence, he rarely gave his own in return. Men close to him as men were permitted to come, entertained for him the most sincere respect. William H. Herndon, after sixteen years of close personal contact, never called him by his first name. He was an artist in the use of profanity, but Rankin, who was four years in the Lincoln-Herndon office, says Herndon never swore in Lincoln's presence.

In this presence I need not say much about Lincoln at the bar. It has been clearly demonstrated that he was a lawyer profound in his knowledge of legal principles and armed at all points for successful legal controversy. It is also well authenticated that he was merely a case lawyer who depended upon his knowledge of human nature and his adroit trial tactics for success in practice. Herndon does not subscribe to either theory. He says he never knew him to read a law book clear through; that he was not particularly diligent in the preparation of most of his cases, but that when he became interested in the establishment of moral principle or legal justice he would rise to real eminence. Judge Davis in eulogy gave him unstinted praise as a lawyer, but he is on record privately as substantially qualifying this estimate. However, the fact that he had a large practice, in which he was unusually successful, is convincingly in evidence as to Lincoln's ability as a lawyer.

Herndon declares Lincoln was "inordinately ambitious." Reasoning as to kindred matters, John Hay says: "No really great man was ever modest." These men had opportunity such as few others ever had to know their subject, but the student of history does not get the impression that in his relation with politics Lincoln was immodest or unseemly in his desire for office. He never seemed in the least to modify his conduct or his expression to win votes. He seemed to do and to say, out of a full heart and sane mind, the things that promote friendship and invite confidence.

"Lincoln had no money sense," said Herndon, a statement that seems justified by the record. His mercantile ventures at Salem were ill advised and ill-starred. "Think of a lawyer carrying a case through the Supreme Court for \$10.00," indignantly exclaimed Judge Davis. A letter on record shows that

he returned \$10.00 to a client who had sent him \$25.00 for like service, with the remark: "You must think I am a high priced man." This was only four years before he was elected president. During the period in which he had a large law practice, he was continually pinched for money. Douglas put \$80,000 into the senatorial campaign, while Lincoln made out to raise \$500.00 for the republican fund by making a turn with Judd. Most men with this sort of improvidence are heedless as to expenditure and indifferent to debt, while Lincoln was economical in his habits and sensitive to financial obligation. It took him many years to pay off his Salem debts, but not a dollar went to discount. He seems to have saved a good deal of money during his four years in Washington on a salary of \$25,000. But the lack of "money sense" and commercial sagacity in private life did not seem an especial handicap in the presidency. He knew men and he sensed affairs. He wisely selected department heads and trusted them, but he was by no means a mere figurehead in emergency. His decision as to the legal tender act, when there was fierce division in Congress and the country, was wise, and he made no mistakes in matters of financial or commercial policy. His Register of the Treasury, L. E. Chittenden, says he displayed much acuteness in matters of importance in treasury administration. While inclined to be weak as to details, he was always strong in fundamentals of principle or policy.

All his life Lincoln manifested elements of leadership. Interesting personality, rather than native genius, seems to have given him recognition in the earlier years. At twenty-three he was elected captain of his company in the Black Hawk war against a man of influence and prominence, with plenty of votes to spare. When a national figure, he said: "I never had any other success in life that gave me so much real satisfaction." The same year he was a candidate for state representative. He lost narrowly, but his precinct gave him an almost solid vote. He was successful in four ensuing legislative campaigns, usually leading the ticket. In his second session he was chief factor in the removal of the State Capitol of Illinois from Vandalia to Springfield. He was at least twice the nominee of the Whig caucus for speaker. Almost from the beginning of

his legislative career he was influential, but there is little in this long law-making experience suggestive of future greatness. He was one of the leaders in the movement for internal improvement which plunged the state into debt without any sort of adequate return. One significant incident survives. Both houses had enthusiastically passed a set of resolutions declaring "the right of property in slaves is sacred to the slaveholding states" and frowning upon the formation of abolition societies. Lincoln framed a mild protest declaring the institution of slavery to be "founded on both injustice and bad policy, but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tended to increase rather than to abate the evils." To this protest he could secure the support of only one other member, one who was retiring from politics.

There were numerous aspiring men at Springfield, but by agreement with two others, each to take a term in Congress, Lincoln was elected in 1846. In this campaign he was opposed by the renowned Methodist evangelist, Peter Cartright, to whom Whigism and Calvinism were twin abominations. The parson had defeated Lincoln for the legislature in 1832, and he made a vigorous congressional campaign in which he charged his rival with being an atheist. During this contest Lincoln dropped into one of Cartright's meetings. At the close, Cartright called upon all who wanted to go to heaven to stand up. All arose but Lincoln. Then he asked all who did not want to go to heaven to arise. Still Lincoln declined. Then the preacher said: "I am surprised to see Abe Lincoln sitting back there unmoved by these appeals. If Mr. Lincoln does not wish to go to heaven or to escape hell, perhaps he will tell us where he does want to go to." Lincoln slowly arose and replied: "I am going to Congress." After the slavery issue became acute, however, and the war came on, the evangelist became an ardent supporter of the emancipator.

When Lincoln became nationally prominent in the next decade, fellow members of congress remembered him merely as an interesting personality. His only measure of significance was a bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. He gave little evidence suggesting the greatness of his future.

The two years at Washington would seem to have unsettled Lincoln in his plans and purposes and might have dwarfed his future. He could not return to congress. He had agreed not to run again, and if he had, defeat would have been likely, because of his unpopular attitude toward the Mexican war. But he seemed to like the Washington game and was anxious to secure appointment as Commissioner of the General Land Office, in which he was disappointed. He might have taken the governorship of the territory of Oregon, tendered by President Taylor, whose candidacy he had enthusiastically supported, but for the opposition of his wife.

Herndon says Lincoln seemed to have lost all interest in the law, but that he finally got a grip on himself and determined to eschew politics and devote his energies entirely to his profession. This he did, until, to use his own words, "the repeal of the Missouri compromise of 1850 aroused me again." Then the enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska law in 1854, which gave to territories the right to introduce slavery, made the political situation intensely acute. The author of the measure, Stephen A. Douglas, returned to Illinois to meet a hostile reception. At Chicago he announced a speech in which he sought to justify his action. It was Saturday evening. For several hours he battled with an angry audience which would not permit him to make explanation. Looking at his watch he finally announced: "It is now Sunday morning. I am going to church, and you may go to hell." On his trail, Lincoln was making life a burden to the Little Giant by assaults upon his squatter sovereignty issue. To the surprise of his friends, Lincoln yielded to the appeals of Douglas in the agreement known as the "Peoria Truce," that neither should make any more speeches during the campaign.

A few months later Lincoln was elected to the legislature. He resigned before the session opened that he might better promote his candidacy for the United States Senate. On joint ballot he had the highest vote, forty-five. Lyman Trumbull, a democrat opposed to Douglas and his slavery policy, had five votes, all democratic, which would not go to Lincoln, the Whig. Recognizing the danger of defeat of the Anti-Nebraska program,

Lincoln with difficulty prevailed upon his friends to vote for Trumbull, effecting his election. His heart was in the cause, and he accepted the humiliation of defeat rather than the hazard of hesitation. This was probably his keenest political disappointment, as the prize was thought to be fairly in his grasp.

In 1855 Lincoln was in the eddies of indecision as to party relationship. The Whig party was in the throes of dissolution. He was never an Abolitionist. The republican party was in its initial activities and had no national character. In the spring of 1856, however, he enlisted under its colors. At heart an Abolitionist, Herndon, in Lincoln's absence, had signed his name to a call for a meeting of the Friends of Freedom to send delegates to the coming Republican State Convention. Some friends of Lincoln protested this meant ruin. Reaching him by wire, the reply to Herndon was: "All right, go ahead, I will meet you radicals and all." Called out in the State Convention, he made what is known as the "Lost Speech"—lost because it was so eloquent and absorbing that reporters soon dropped their pencils in sheer forgetfulness "to live," as Herndon put it, "only in the inspiration of the hour." Men who heard all his greater efforts always insisted this was Lincoln's greatest speech, with slavery as the inspiration.

Stephen A. Douglas was for many years a commanding figure, not only in Illinois, but in the nation. Legislator at twenty-three, Supreme Judge at twenty-eight, Congressman at thirty, and Senator at thirty-four, he seemed destined to reach the highest eminence of political preferment. In the Democratic National Convention of 1852, while he could not secure a nomination for himself, he dictated the nomination of Pierce. He was in 1858 the most influential member of the Senate. In his "Twenty Years" Blaine says "America's three leading parliamentarians since the beginning were Clay, Thaddeus Stevens, and Douglas." When he came out for re-election in 1858, he seemed to have clear sailing. He had broken with President Buchanan over the LeCompton fraud, a fact which seemed to his advantage in Illinois.

Then came the disturbance of Lincoln's candidacy, with the challenge to joint debate. Douglas' friends were jubilant, but

Douglas himself understood he had a real fight on his hands. He had privately admitted that Lincoln in public discussion gave him more trouble than any of the debaters in congress. Republicans were apprehensive, but Lincoln was sure of himself and his cause.

In all political emergencies this candidate was disposed to counsel his friends, reserving all rights of decision as to his own course. His "House Divided" contention had been condemned in council. The questions he proposed to ask Douglas were held dangerous in that they might be so answered as to insure his re-election. Lincoln admitted this might be true, but that the answer that might make him senator would surely defeat him for president in 1860, and "that fight is worth a hundred of this." The questions were asked and the answers, no doubt, saved the senatorship to Douglas, but ruined him in the south as a candidate for president.

In these debates Lincoln put Douglas on the defensive by denouncing the institution of slavery as grossly immoral and definitely subversive of inherent human rights. In the first meeting at Ottawa he said:

"Judge Douglas is going back to the era of our Revolution, and, to the extent of his ability, muzzling the cannon which thunders its annual joyous return. When he invites any people, willing to have slavery, to establish it, he is blowing out the moral lights around us. When he says he 'cares not whether slavery is voted down or voted up'—that it is a sacred right of self-government—he is, in my judgment, penetrating the human soul, and eradicating the light of reason and the love of liberty in this American people."

Charged by Douglas with intent to disrupt the Union, Lincoln made it plain that he was for all the slave rights of the slave states guaranteed by the constitution. He did not purpose to make war upon these rights. He did, however, array himself against the further extension of slave territory, and declared that perpetual union could only be assured by some plan looking to the ultimate extinction of the institution. Meeting the charge that he was proposing social and political equality for negroes, Lincoln said: "I am opposed to negro suffrage and am not in favor of negro jury service; I recognize the fact that

between the whites and negroes there exists a physical difference which will probably forever forbid their living together upon the footing of perfect equality; but in the right to eat the bread his own hands earn he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglas and the equal of every living man." Quoting further: "I don't understand that because I don't want a negro woman for a slave, I must necessarily want her for a wife."

Douglas was not a corrupt nor an unpatriotic man, but he had a good deal of a reputation as an opportunist and as a trickster in debate. Lincoln declared he would tell a lie to an audience of ten thousand today if he felt he would probably have to make denial tomorrow to an audience of five thousand. He was continually trying to discredit Lincoln with the charge that he had refused to vote support to the Mexican war when he was in Congress. Repeated denial did not prevent repeated return to the false charge. He made it again at the Charleston debate. On the platform, as a friend of Douglas, sat O. B. Ficklin, a member of the House at the time of the war. Lincoln took him by the collar and pulled him forward to state the truth of the matter, and being a fair man, Ficklin was compelled to deny the charge of Douglas. Some time afterward he remarked: "Lincoln shook all the democracy out of me that day."

Many political issues of great pulling power with the public are based upon mere fallacy and foreshadow imminent peril. So it was with the Douglas issue of popular sovereignty. It seemed plausible and not unfair to say that the people of a territory should control their own domestic concerns without outside interference. To the timorous or the truculent this plan seemed a way out of disturbing controversy. As Lincoln said, "it meant that if one man insisted upon enslaving another, a third man had no right to object," but the fickle proposition tended to soften the bald issue of slavery extension, and it was the best campaign expedient a crafty politician could devise. In our own day political crimes unspeakable are committed by stressing the illusion of popular sovereignty.

Lincoln throughout remained true to his principles. He never tried to adapt his argument to local atmosphere. He never

made any sacrifice of conviction to win votes. He did not conform to any conventional rule of oratory. He made himself understood as few speakers do by simple language and plain logic. It was said he could put more flesh on the skeleton of an idea than any other man of his time. Horace White reported the debates for the Chicago Tribune. Recalling this experience late in life he said: "I never knew a man who would bring more men of doubtful or hostile leanings around to his way of thinking by talking to them on a platform. After listening to him a few minutes, when he got well warmed up with his subject, nobody would mind whether he was graceful or not. All thought of grace or form was lost in the exceeding attractiveness of what he was saying."

At the election, the Lincoln ticket carried the popular vote, but Douglas had a majority in the legislature. Lincoln had lost the immediate reward, but he had won a great moral victory. Douglas won but to lose the grand prize of 1860 and to discredit himself before discriminating posterity.

All through this campaign Lincoln was embarrassed by the opposition of prominent republicans of the east. Because Douglas had quarreled with Buchanan over details of the Kansas issue, he was believed to be coming to the republican standard as had Lyman Trumbull and other leading democrats. Seward, Weed, and Greeley of New York were openly for Douglas, and the Tribune, circulating largely in Illinois, had to be reckoned with. Wilson and Banks of Massachusetts, Colfax of Indiana, and others prominent in the new party, were making trouble for Lincoln, while Douglas was denouncing him and others of his faith as black republicans and foes of the Union because of their opposition to the extension of slavery to which these eastern republicans were definitely committed.

It is interesting to speculate on what might have happened. Had Douglas abandoned the south and come over to the Republican party, as did Trumbull, he might have been President. In any event, he would have eliminated Lincoln from national consideration. It should not be forgotten, however, that when the rebellion came Douglas gave to Lincoln and the Union his cordial support until his death a few months later.

The debates had attracted the attention of the whole country. They were reported by special representatives of newspapers in New York, Philadelphia and other leading cities, a number of whom followed Lincoln to appointments intervening the joint meetings. No event of the period was given wider or more intimate publicity. Lincoln was now a national factor. His Cooper Institute speech which was staged a little later by New York men nationally known, met with general approval on the part of the great audience, and it was published in full by leading papers with favorable editorial comment.

At the close of his term in Congress, in 1848, Lincoln had acceptably spoken at a number of points in New England. He went from Cooper Institute to visit his son at school in New Hampshire, and delivered a number of speeches in the neighboring territory, which were uniformly well received. In the metropolis and in New England he seemed more than to justify the high estimate inspired by the debates. He was much in demand for political addresses in Ohio, Wisconsin and elsewhere in the west in 1858 and 1859. Without effort or expectation on his part, he had received a substantial vote for Vice President at the Republican Convention in 1856.

In view of what had transpired in these later years, it is strange that the opinion has since so widely prevailed that the nomination of Lincoln in 1860 was due to availability, based on the obscurity of the candidate which had saved him from criticism, that Seward or Chase were logical candidates, while the nomination of Lincoln was a mere political accident. The trail of republicanism had been blazed by Lincoln to a greater extent than by any other man east or west. He it was who formulated the principles upon which state groups were affiliated into national organization. He it was who gave prominence and effectiveness to a practical anti-slavery program. By his radical attitude Chase had failed to afford a rallying point for a successful national campaign. "The irrepressible conflict" and "higher law than the constitution" announced by Seward too strongly hinted at anarchy and bloodshed, though the author, of course meant to foreshadow no such calamity. A leading biographer says: "We know that Seward, if he could have had

his own way, would have brought the common cause to ruin." Lincoln planted himself squarely on the constitution which asserted the right of property in slavery, though he deemed the institution as immoral and menacing to perpetual union. His chief assault was upon slavery extension which was not difficult of northern defense. Upon the basis of the existing situation the nomination of Lincoln was at once logical and expedient on the record of the several candidates and in response to the demands of the hour. It is well said that "he had shown a statesman's grasp of the situation more than any other republican leader."

After the October elections, then held in a number of northern states, little doubt remained as to the election of Lincoln. It was admitted by Douglas. On his hopeless tour through the south he had this talk with Parson Brownlow in Chattanooga:

"I suppose, Senator Douglas, you agree with me that Lincoln will be elected? 'Certainly,' said Douglas. 'Now Senator, you know Lincoln well. I wish to ask whether you regard him as honest and patriotic?' Douglas replied: 'Mr. Brownlow, Mr. Lincoln is both honest and patriotic.' One other question: 'The Secession leaders of Tennessee, who will advocate secession after the election, are saying in the newspapers and on the stump that Seward or Chase wrote his speeches in the joint debate he had with you two years ago in your race for the Senate.' Douglas smiled and replied: 'That is utterly absurd; Mr. Lincoln has more talents than Seward, Chase, or any other leader of his party, and has no occasion to call on any one for assistance in writing his speeches.'"

The South was seething with sedition throughout the campaign, at the close of which came eruptions of open treason. The North had spoken decisively. Lincoln had carried every non-slave holding state except that New Jersey, through a fusion, gave Douglas three electoral votes, which with the vote of Missouri gave him, all told, twelve electors. Breckenridge had all the south with the exception of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, which voted for Bell.

As John Van Buren, Prince John, piquantly put it, "Old Buchanan, the miserable old coward, sat in the White House like a bread and milk poultice drawing secession to a head." Early in February, six states formed the Southern Confederacy,

with Jefferson Davis as President. Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas and Tennessee seceded in March. There was little union sentiment in any of these states except in Tennessee, where Parson Brownlow was leading a forlorn hope. Just before they locked him up, he declared he would "fight the secession leaders until Hell froze over, then fight them on the ice."

The inaugural address was in language new and strange to ears political. In terms kindly, but definite, the President asserted the perpetuity of the union under the constitution, and denied the right of secession. He clearly outlined the federal duty to maintain the status quo, to use all power invested to defeat any attempt at separation.

Consider the irresistible logic of the following paragraph:

"Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you."

But while designating secession as the essence of anarchy, no other ruler has ever made such tender and searching appeal for harmony. "The Government will not assail you," he declared to the south. "You can have no conflict without yourselves being the aggressor." The yearning entreaty of the closing paragraph is a classic in the language of conciliation.

Lincoln said he had his cabinet practically completed before he went to sleep the night of the election. Since the record justifies the belief that three portfolios had been pledged at Chicago, the task was less perplexing and difficult. The candidate had charged his managers that he must not be bound by convention obligations, but Judge Davis and others secured

support in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana by pledges in behalf of Cameron, Chase and Caleb Smith and these obligations were duly honored.

With a single exception the President was the youngest man in the cabinet council. Almost every one of the members would more or less modestly have admitted himself the superior of his chief in ability and experience. At least two privately expressed humiliation in inferior service, patriotically accepted by each that he might personally save his beloved country. Secretary Seward developed "Some Thoughts for the President," pointing out the failure of the administration to get anywhere after a month of floundering, and blandly hinting that the Secretary of State might be induced to take the helm to rescue the ship of state from the troughs of indecision and inefficiency.

General Winfield Scott in his dotage was feebly functioning as commander-in-chief. The old warrior's heart was right but his body and brain had lost the virility of leadership. The Bull Run rout emphasized military peril. As compared with the North, the South was rich in military genius. After declining the tendered federal chieftancy, Lee had gone with his state. The government had no generals to cope with Lee, Jackson and Johnston. Our army leadership remained for development. McClellan could make an army, but was a failure as a fighter. He held the flower of the army inactive for months while quarreling with the President and the war department in his demand for more and more and yet more of equipment with which to attack the enemy far weaker in resources than himself. He repulsed Lee at Antietam only to allow him to withdraw with his whole army, whereas it was apparent he might easily have turned retreat into a rout with great loss to the enemy.

In the meantime the people of the northern states were in a ferment of disagreement. There was much violent opposition to the war which was decidedly mischievous in effect. There was demand for sectional settlement on any basis to stop hostility. The assault on Sumpter and other southern effrontery served to strengthen the government, but even after that the element inclined to stand solidly behind the administration, in its policy of saving the union with or without slavery, as circum-

stances might demand, was doubtless in the minority. Denounced by Congress, Senator Cameron was forced out of the cabinet. Stanton was appointed to fill the vacancy. He had openly condemned Lincoln as all kinds of an incompetent, and in the cabinet continued to insist upon his general imbecility. An empty treasury and an inadequate financial system embarrassed administration. Foreign relations were menacing and delicate treatment was required. A hostile press was going to the limit of treason. Leading republican papers played at cross purposes with national destiny. The South was winning while the North was honeycombed with doubt and despondency with such blunderers as Horace Greeley clamoring for peace councils. Invincible in peace as the champion of freedom, he had advised letting "the wayward sisters go," then foolishly voiced the slogan "On to Richmond," then in timorous truckling insisted that peace might be restored if the President would only be willing to meet with representatives of the confederacy.

In this bedlam of confusion it remained for Abraham Lincoln to bring order out of chaos. Many besides his hostile critics believed him to be dallying with destiny in the early months of the war. Indecision or lack of courage had no place in his program. Than himself, no living man better understood the gigantic undertaking of preserving the union. The wisdom of his plan to throw the odium of rebellion upon the south cannot be questioned. The world as well as the American people must clearly understand that the south was the aggressor. The people of the south were united. The North was getting its bearings, waiting for proof that war was inevitable, if the union was to be saved. These vital considerations prescribed delay on the part of the government.

History more and more attests the wise deliberation, the sane judgment, the shrewd penetration, and the infinite patience of the President in these days in which the perpetuity of popular government was most involved in doubt. Who but Abraham Lincoln could so sanely have diagnosed the situation when he took office? Pray, who else could have used any written language in expression so appealing in its pleading for peace on the basis of the constitution? Who but this well poised leader

could so diplomatically have saved to his administration the real service of which Seward was capable after his insulting suggestion of presidential inferiority and presidential abdication, and bring the offending secretary finally to say: Lincoln was "the best man I ever knew?" Who would so adroitly and successfully have toned down the state dispatch in the Trent affair, turning a war challenge into a fairly benevolent note. Stanton had in professional relations long before the war treated Lincoln with much less than scant courtesy which deeply wounded the Illinois lawyer. Who but Lincoln would have forgotten this offense and ignored Stanton's repeated contemptuous reference to the President in office and thereby secured to the nation the vital service of a great war secretary, meanwhile conquering an insubordinate spirit into a state of absolute affection as well as of supreme confidence. Lincoln bore with McClellan who would not fight, who flouted his authority, and while taking the gaff of public condemnation continued him in command while waiting the development of a leader not yet available. Could any other man more effectually have squelched the gabbing Greeley in his arbitrary and petulant demands for recognition? Fremont was a popular idol, why, we of this day try to understand. For insubordination as well as for impossible army management, he deserved to be drummed out of the service, but the patience and diplomacy of Lincoln kept the friends of Fremont in step with the music of the union while keeping the pathfinder employed harmlessly as possible.

Congress by turns supported and opposed the President without regard to due respect or plain consistency. He was too slow and too mild for the radicals, too bold and too offensive for the conservative members of his own party. As Lowell put it: "At first he was so slow that he tired out all those who see no evidence of progress but in blowing up the engine; then he was so fast that he took the breath away from those who think there is no getting on safely while there is a spark of fire under the boilers." It is of record that at one time no congressman wanted to be understood as being a Lincoln man. But what president ever so kept to the even tenor of his way, without assumption and without resentment, to the end that he might and

did secure the substantial support vital to administrative success? Surely, he was "A tower of strength which stood four-square to all the winds that blew."

Subsequent understanding made it appear that during the crucial years in which his heart was bleeding for the carnage and sacrifice of the war while suffering domestic bereavement, and wounded in the house of his friends, the President was growing into service more comprehensive and far-reaching than had before or has since been performed by any human being. He found time to scrutinize, and to a degree supervise our foreign relations and the work of the war, treasury, navy and other departments of government. He wrote with his own hands not only vital instruments of state, but a mass of important official and private correspondence, not to mention personal notes like the Bixby letter, to soothe the sorrows and to afford assistance to the victims of war. Out of his days, all too short, and too full, he gave audience to the judicious and the frivolous, insisting on seeing wives and mothers come to plead for mercy for loved ones, to whom he could hardly deny compassion, and with many of whom he mingled his tears. All the time he manifested deep interest in the men in the field, and was unremitting in his endeavors to mitigate the suffering in camp and hospital. Ingersoll says Lincoln "did merciful things as stealthily as others commit crimes."

Incompetent military leadership was a constant source of deep trouble until Grant and Sherman established their title to command in the western area of the war. When Grant began to loom in the darkness of dreary disaster, his maneuvers caught the eager eye of the President. He defended the general from assaults of jealousy and insubordination, and followed him from Henry to Donaldson, to Shiloh to Nashville and to Corinth with feverish anxiety. His sending of Charles A. Dana, of the War Department, to get a close-up of Grant, was merely a manifestation of presidential painstaking in matters of vital emergency. Henceforth, he never doubted the ability of Grant to get results. He gave him generous support without criticism and probably never issued an order substantially circumscribing his movements, merely suggesting expedient proceeding. He had

finally found a general who would fight and upon whom he could depend to bring victory to the union arms.

In matters administrative and military the President rapidly developed rare capacity in the essentials of leadership. He counseled widely. As Charnwood says, "the study of his record shows a steady ripening of mind and character to the end." He trusted his ministers, but in the larger events of the crucial years he assumed the responsibility of decision, and relied substantially upon his own judgment. Emancipation was a matter for his own determination. It became a military necessity as well as a moral achievement. It strengthened the union cause at home and restrained the recognition of the confederacy abroad. He had declared he would save the union. He would save it with slavery if this were necessary. He would save it without slavery if that was the way of salvation. Abraham Lincoln was noted for his candor. He was instinctively honest and truthful, and yet there is substantial basis for the suspicion that in his heart of hearts, which always throbbed for freedom, he had never doubted, after the war begun, that slavery was doomed to extinction, and that he would find a way when the hour had struck for action. America has never produced a man of more astute and penetrating vision, and he knew as others have not known, how to make great dreams come true.

After the fires of war-passion had subsided, the record of Lincoln's first administration was given abundant approval in all its important events and time has more and more justified his mighty achievement. The end of the war was definitely foreshadowed by the middle of '64. The credit of the nation had been sustained and fortified. Foreign powers desiring and expecting the success of the confederacy had been restrained and won by shrewd mediation abroad and skillful direction of events at home. The keen perception, the rare diplomacy, the infinite patience and forbearance, the masterful leadership of the President become more and more wonderful as the dangerous and doubtful situation is better understood. In the language of Charnwood: "This man had stood alone in the dark. He had done justice, he had loved mercy, he had walked humbly with his God."

It therefore becomes more and more astounding that with all this extraordinary record Lincoln should have been the subject of widespread condemnation throughout the North, and that in the midsummer his defeat for re-election was believed to be almost a foregone conclusion. In August he was told by Henry J. Raymond, chairman of the National Republican Committee, and by Thurlow Weed, one of the greatest of party managers, that the case was hopeless. From many sections, leaders sent in reports to this doleful effect.

The result was a Lincoln landslide, recording the largest popular majority ever given any candidate for president up to that time. McClellan carried only New Jersey, Delaware and Kentucky. "Seldom in history was so much staked upon a popular vote, I suppose never in history," said Emerson in substantial truth.

In popular government it has been demonstrated in many critical campaigns that everybody knows more than anybody. In mass the people may be wiser and more dependable than the leaders are aware. No issue nor no strategy ever generates the pulling power that may be developed in a political campaign by a man trusted by the common people and to whom they turn in times of real emergency. Sixty years ago John Stuart Mill said: "The people of the United States, when confronting some grave crisis, have often seemed upon the point of doing the wrong thing but in the end their common sense has prevailed and they have done the right thing."

Public confidence established by the elections, and accumulating military successes foreshadowed early peace and eased the tremendous burden of administration. After all the stress and strain, all the personal injustice, all the bitterness and all the burden of the crucial years, the President was able to say: "Since I have been here, I have not willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom" and "while duly grateful for the expression of public confidence, it adds nothing to my satisfaction that any man may be disappointed by the results." He desired all who had not differed from him to join in this same spirit toward those who had.

While serving the government with ability in his official capacity, Secretary Chase had been the member of the cabinet most difficult in co-operation, chiefly because of over-weening ambition for the presidency. All through his term of service he permitted this weakness to develop disloyalty to his chief. He seriously rocked the government boat by seeking the presidency early in the campaign. Foiled in this endeavor, though entirely unopposed by the President, he continued to embarrass the administration by irritating personal and official conduct. In July he tendered his resignation, and was evidently much surprised at its acceptance. He and other members had been asked to continue in service under such circumstances, but in this case it was not so to be. The resignation was curtly accepted. The President and Secretary had "reached a point of mutual embarrassment in official relations which it seems cannot be overcome or longer continued consistently with the public service" is the way Lincoln put it. A little later, when there was no political end to serve, when he might have yielded to the insistence of friends to "crush him out," the President magnanimously appointed Chase as Chief Justice because it was an appointment fit to be made in the interests of the public service. There has never been but one president with "malice toward none."

The second inaugural was a strange note of harmony in the midst of discord unspeakable. "Probably no other speech of a modern statesman was so unreservedly the language of deep religious feeling," says Lord Charnwood. In contrasting the situation of four years before with the present as to the attitude of the north and south, it was said: "Both parties deprecate war; but one of them would make war rather than that the nation survive, while the other would accept war rather than let it perish. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God. * * It may seem strange that men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us 'judge not that we be not judged.'" The closing paragraphs justify the title of sacred poem given to this marvelous state paper which strongly appeals to generations succeeding. As Philips Brooks well said: "Lincoln vindi-

cated the greatness of real goodness and the goodness of real greatness.”

The remarkable career was now closing. While the last embers of the rebellion were being stamped out, evidence was accumulating as to the magnanimous purposes of the administration toward the people of the south and their leaders when peace should be established. No other man of the ages has ever lived and governed “with charity for all.” After he was no more, the South came to understand too late that in his blind fanaticism the assassin had slain its best friend—a friend they so grievously needed in the service of restoring the waste places of the war and in avoiding many of the abuses visited upon them in the days of alleged reconstruction.

As it was said by James Russell Lowell: “Never before that startled April morning did such multitudes of men shed tears for the death of one they had never seen, as if with him a friendly presence had been taken away from their lives leaving them colder and darker. Never was funeral panegyric so eloquent as the silent look of sympathy which strangers exchanged when they met on that day. Their common manhood had lost a kinsman.” And Emerson said: “Old as history is, and manifold as are its tragedies, I doubt if any death has caused so much pain to mankind as this death has caused.” Above the bier of the dead President the subdued Stanton in deep grief exclaimed: “There lies the most perfect ruler of men the world has ever seen.”

Abraham Lincoln is the first public man to make an impression upon my child mind. I remember as if it were last month events of the campaign of 1860. In Illinois where I lived only Lincoln and Douglas were in evidence. How distinctly I recall the tumult and the shouting, the political rallies, the torch light processions, the disturbing of personal relationship by the fierce contention of a community heavily democratic. The only physical encounter of my whole life was then and there at the age of six, when a neighbor boy called me a “black republican.” I was proud to be a republican, but resented the sable adjective. How the horrors of war burned into my mind and heart. Now, as on that April day, I see my father as with ashen face

and trembling lips he told of the assassination which embalmed in history the wisest ruler and the gentlest memory of our western world. Through all the intervening years every word of information or intelligent comment relating to Abraham Lincoln has been to me of absorbing interest. Most interesting of all are the pages devoted to the expression of Lincoln himself. I have read and reread the bulky volumes of his speeches, messages and correspondence. There is to me not a dull page in these records. When he wrote of matters vital, or to a degree immaterial, or with the voice of authority to his countrymen, or in simple recital to the lowly and obscure, he invested his expression with enduring interest.

When Lincoln was assailing the institution of slavery and resisting its extension, many believed he was inciting rebellion. Some may yet believe that the agitation he inspired and fostered brought on the Civil war. In these later years no writer cares to endorse this idea. It is difficult to contemplate the history of the 50's and 60's without recognizing the influence of a higher power in the affairs of this people. The compromise of 1850 unquestionably averted civil war. Men who bitterly denounce Webster and Clay for their work, should agree with Senator Hoar. In his biography he confesses that while in his earlier years he condemned these statesmen for their part in this proceeding, he came to understand it meant the salvation of the Union. Compromise or fight was the alternative. What mind informed as to conditions existing can now doubt that the clash of arms then would have meant the dissolution of the Union. In the ten years ensuing, the North made marvelous growth in population and wealth which barely saved the situation. Few realize that a few hundred more votes in Pennsylvania in 1856 would have made Fremont president, with all the inefficiency he later displayed. Had the wise men of the east succeeded in 1858 in their imbecile designs to kill off Lincoln, the success of which might have made Douglas president, how would the union have fared? Do the developments of the first half of 1861 justify the belief that if Seward had won at Chicago, he would successfully have performed the work accomplished by Lincoln? Upon mature deliberation his "ultra

conciliatory policy" featured by reliable historians, does not inspire confidence.

War was inevitable. When the compromise of 1850 was made, Henry Clay saw as in a vision the shock of civil war coming in 1860. It came a few months later. The issue of slavery was, perhaps, controlling, but it was strongly supplemented. The South cherished its peculiar institutions social, as well as political, and did not try to conceal her contempt for the mud sills and greasy mechanics of the North. The North had yielded to the limits of endurable stultification, and her growing strength gave notice of impending trouble in case of further persistence in arrogance and insolence.

It is interesting, if not gratifying, in these later days to hear men proclaim themselves as Abraham Lincoln republicans—men who represent all that he was *not*, and nothing that he *was*. Invariably, these men are radicals. They assault the citadel of success and flag the so-called common people with a futile program of impossible indulgence. Lincoln was never a radical. He was for the plain people, but he never exploited them as martyrs nor numskulls. He was a corporation attorney to the extent of defending railways against unjust taxation and the obstruction of transportation across the Mississippi river. He favored accumulation in the interest of common prosperity. He encouraged self-reliance and industry, and economy as essential in co-operation with American opportunity. How he would have despised such perversion of his patriotism, his principles and his purposes if, indeed, he could have despised anything or anybody. He said: "Prosperity is the fruit of labor. It is desirable. It is a positive good to the world. That some should be rich shows that others may become rich, and hence, it is just encouragement to industry and enterprise. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him labor diligently and build one for himself. Thus, by example, assuring that his own shall be safe from violence when built." He spoke volumes to this effect and the agitator is challenged to produce any evidence whatever that he ever in his life predicted the ruinous reign of the money power, as so frequently asserted by disturbers.

The word "politician" has been considered a term of reproach. Lincoln was a politician, one of the shrewdest the country has ever known. He knew the game of politics as few do. He had due regard for sagacity and strategy, but he would not lie, and he could not betray the public confidence. He knew nothing of the arts or parts of deception, which deludes the voter or prostitutes political organization. He could, and did dodge an abolition meeting to avoid political embarrassment, but he scorned to trifle with issues he felt to be vital. He might have defeated Douglas for the Senate by resorting to subterfuge, but he never would have been President. He might have been more popular by the use of language to conceal thought after his election, but he could not have saved the Union. He knew when to temporize and when to fight. He knew how to fight without rancor, and to compromise without sacrifice of principle.

With pride unspeakable, it has been the habit of many men to say: "I knew Lincoln," but who, in fact, ever knew Lincoln so as to diagram his character and equipment and analyze his motives. When the men who "knew Lincoln" wrote out the details of their knowledge, they expressed themselves as "most ignorant of what they were most assured" in attempted analysis and interpretation. With all his consecration to conviction and to human welfare, with all his Christian tenderness and devotion, he could be so much misunderstood by the ministers of his own community that twenty out of twenty-three of them voted against him in 1860, and they thought they "knew Lincoln." Horace Greeley thought he "knew Lincoln," but when the record was closed he was moved to say: "Others might have restored the Union, but God gave the one leader who by his wisdom, patience and courage restored it free of the stain of slavery, leaving to such short-sighted mortals as I no part but to wonder and adore." The partnership between Lincoln and Herndon was attended by personal intimacy much beyond the ordinary. After sixteen years, each was able to say that no cross word had ever passed between them. A man of more than usual shrewdness, the junior partner through these years, and through all the remainder of his long life, made a

study of Abraham Lincoln, yet his later writings indicate confusion and uncertainty as to anything like definite understanding of the mind and heart and soul of the chief he so much adored.

It is frequently alleged that the death of Lincoln in April of 1865 was fortunate for his fame—that the developments of the later sixties would have tended to involve him in political disaster. The record does not justify this inference. The President would have remained master of the situation. The shambles of battle, and all the sorrow and sacrifice of war preyed on his sensitive mind and lowered his exceptional vitality. He could not be at his very best in a field so distinctly foreign to his training and temperament. He would have revelled in the conflict of ideas which followed, with the Union no longer in peril, when his masterful equipment in logic and persuasion and personality could have been exercised in peaceful environment. He would have been even more successful in overcoming radicals and carpet-baggers than he had been in fighting rebels and copperheads, adding to his fame by achievement of wonderful value to his reunited country.

Americans of the united union, North and South, agree in surpassing tribute to this, the best human product of the western world, but probably the highest estimates of Lincoln come from the nation that gave him such deep concern during the Civil war. I have occasionally quoted Lord Charnwood, who in 1917 issued a Lincoln book, which, in its analysis of character and conditions, is the best volume of the Lincoln collection. This discriminating writer calmly invests the Lincoln character and achievement with wisdom and strength and importance such as hardly any American author has found language to express.

Though I have already taken too much time, I will quote a few extracts from the generous estimate of Lord Charnwood and another distinguished Briton:

“Though the transactions in which he bore his part were little understood in this country till they were half forgotten, has tradition ever failed to give him by just instinct his rank with the greatest of our race? * * *

He was a citizen of that far country where there is neither aristocrat nor democrat.

Nobody else could have kept the North and South together.

Not many conquerors, and certainly few successful statesmen, have escaped the tendency of power to harden or, at least, to narrow their human sympathies; but in this man a natural wealth of tender compassion became richer and more tender while in the stress of deadly conflict he developed an astounding strength.

Lincoln, one of the few supreme statesmen of the last three centuries * * * was misunderstood and underrated in his lifetime, and as yet has hardly come into his own, for his place is among the great men of the earth."

At the unveiling of the Lincoln statue near Westminster Abbey in August of 1920, Lloyd George spoke as follows:

"I doubt whether any statesman who ever lived sank so deeply into the hearts of the people of many lands as Abraham Lincoln did. I am not sure that you in America realize the extent to which he is also our possession and our pride. His courage, fortitude, patience, humanity, clemency, his trust in the people, his belief in democracy, and, may I add, some of the phrases in which he gave expression to those attributes, will stand out forever as beacons to guide troubled nations and their perplexed leaders. Resolute in war, he was moderate in victory. Misrepresented, misunderstood, underestimated, he was patient to the last. But the people believed in him all the time, and they still believe in him.

In his life he was a great American. He is an American no longer. He is one of those giant figures, of whom there are very few in history, who lose their nationality in death. They are no longer Greek or Hebrew or English or American—they belong to mankind. I wonder whether I will be forgiven for saying that George Washington was a great American, but Abraham Lincoln belongs to the common people of every land."

"Born as lowly as the son of God, in a manger."

When I heard Henry Watterson reverently note the obscure advent of Abraham Lincoln in these tender words I was thrilled to the heart. The picture seemed at once so graphic and so true. I saw the Rock Spring cabin with its shake roof and mud daubed chimney. I recalled the simple annals of that humble home, with its fires of aspiration burning low—so low as to

afford hardly a spark of desire or hope to the baby boy so lowly born.

So great was the mind and might of Abraham Lincoln at the fullness of his powers that Bishop Fowler in oratorical climax was moved to say: "He took the continent by the rim and shook it." True as it was dramatic, this statement moved me deeply. Again, there came to me a vision of the origin of this mighty man, born as lowly as the son of God. It is a far cry from the low level of Rock Spring to the mountain peaks of power. I saw the rugged and tortuous trail all along the way. I saw the baby becoming a lad. I heard him crying at his mother's grave. I saw him struggling alone toward the light. I witnessed the development of mind and soul as he grew away from his sordid surroundings and his stolid kinsfolk. I saw him coming into leadership by merit of sheer courage and character. I saw him sacrificing personal ambition to moral victory. I saw him in his Gethsemane communing with his God. I saw him binding up the wounds of woeful war. I saw him grappling with the powers of darkness. His "head was bloody but unbowed." And then it was "He took the continent by the rim and shook it"—shook the scarlet sin of slavery from our western world—shook the slimy serpent of secession forever from our sisterhood of states—finally, with "malice toward none and with charity for all," sealing with a patriot's blood a perpetual covenant of liberty and union.